

For Immediate Release:

In 2004, almost 58,000 children in the County of San Bernardino were referred to the Department of Children's Services for suspected child abuse and neglect. These children do not know what it is like to be "safe and sound" in their own homes. All children have the right to be free from harm and to have their physical, emotional, and educational needs met.

April 2006 has been proclaimed as Child Abuse Prevention Month by the state and federal government for the purpose of promoting community involvement in preventing child abuse. San Bernardino County's Children's Network, Children's Fund and First 5 San Bernardino will sponsor the "8th Annual Shine A Light On Child Abuse" Awards Breakfast at the Ontario DoubleTree Hotel on Wednesday, March 23, 2006 from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. The hotel address is 222 N. Vineyard, Ontario. The public is invited, so please contact Children's Network at (909) 387-8966. The cost of the breakfast is \$10.00 per person.

Many dedicated, compassionate and skilled individuals working under enormous pressure to protect children will be honored for their dedicated and distinguished work in the County. The award categories recognize Volunteers, Social Workers, Law Enforcement Officers, Foster Families and more. Debi Faris-Cifelli, Founder of the Garden of Angels will be recognized as the "Lifetime Advocate" of the Year. The media is invited to attend to cover the event and meet the honorees.

The Blue Ribbon Media Campaign entitled "It Only Takes a Minute" includes educational material, blue ribbon pins, bookmarks and much more. Contact Children's Network for your ribbon and a comprehensive list of available positive parenting materials.

"It takes an entire community to protect a child", said Kent Paxton, Network Officer for the San Bernardino County Children's Network. "As members of the community it is our responsibility"